

Message Text

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13

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

SP-03 OC-06 CCO-00 IO-14 L-03 DRC-01 /095 W

----- 018691

R 030810Z MAY 74

FM AMCONSUL DURBAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1723

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJECT: AFRICAN TELEPHONE WORKERS STRIKE

1. APPROXIMATELY 850 BLACK POST AND TELEGRAPH WORKERS WENT ON STRIKE IN DURBAN WEDNESDAY MORNING MAY 1 AND 500 WERE STILL OUT MAY 3. THE STRIKE BEGAN WHEN TELEPHONE WORKERS DID NOT RECEIVE AN EXPECTED 17.5 PER CENT PAY INCREASE EQUIVALENT TO INCREASE RECEIVED APRIL LAST YEAR. THEY RECEIVED ONLY SMALL NORMAL INCREMENT TO THEIR AVERAGE R59 MONTHLY SALARY.

2. MOST STRIKERS ARE LABORERS, BUT SOME SEMI-SKILLED SENIOR TELEPHONE WORKMEN ARE ALSO INVOLVED. LATTER GROUP TOLD PRESS THEY DID SAME WORK AS WHITE TECHNICIANS BUT WERE PAID FAR LESS. HOWEVER TELEPHONE SPOKESMAN DENIED ANY STRIKERS HAD EQUAL QUALIFICATION TO WHITE WORKERS.

3. STRIKERS CLAIM THEY THREATENED WITH DISMISSAL IF THEY DO NOT RETURN TO WORK BY MONDAY BECAUSE GOVERNMENT WORKERS NOT ALLOWED TO STRIKE. AFTER TELEPHONE COMPANY ANNOUNCED THEY WOULD MAKE A DECISION ON MONDAY REGARDING

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DEMANDS, SOME STRIKERS RETURNED TO WORK ON THURSDAY, BUT

ENGINEERING WORKERS CONTINUED STRIKE.

4. COMMENT: A SENIOR TELEPHONE EXECUTIVE TOLD CONGEN OFFICER HE EXPECTS WORKERS TO ALL RETURN MONDAY. HE BELIEVES THEY ARE AFRAID OF VIOLENCE FROM OTHER STRIKERS IF THEY RETURN SOONER. HE COULD NOT SAY WHAT OFFER IF ANY POST AND TELEGRAPH WOULD MAKE.

DECONTROL MAY 5, 1975.
HOLMES

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